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A Political Study of the Arab-Jewish Conflict: The Arab Refugee Problem (A Case Study). by Rony E. Gabbay

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the new ones had emerged, thereby creating a vacuum which 'left-wing nationalist' officers' regimes filled, only begs the question.

The book is written in Hebrew: those who can read it will find it of value for its source material; those who cannot will find the scope and character of its bibliography instructive.

ALFRED SHERMAN

THE MIDDLE EAST IN WORLD POLITICS. By J. K. Banerji. Calcutta, The World Press, 1960. xii+390 pp. Maps. Map endpapers. Diagrams. Bibliog. Index. Rs. 20.50. 32s.

DR BANERJI's book tells us at least as much about India as it does about the Middle East. It reflects Indian thinking on Asian affairs in its transition from the old-fashioned 'out with imperialism and leave the rest to take care of itself' attitude, to the quest for an empirical understanding to help to guide Indian policy-making through the intricacies of the Middle Eastern scene.

The book's level of scholarship leaves a good deal to be desired. Dr Banerji makes controversial and often patently incorrect assertions without adducing any sources to back them. Furthermore, his use of sources is indiscriminating and unselective: for instance, his main source for the Palestine War and its antecedents is, *mirabile dictu*, John Kimche's *Seven Fallen Pillars*. But he manages to combine emotional 'anti-imperialism' with considerable scepticism as to the capabilities of nationalist movements, and the use of current vulgar-Marxist terminology with competent analysis of Soviet aims and methods.

Dr Banerji argues that the only solution to the region's problems—and to the danger that great-Power rivalries there might set off a world conflict—is some form of disengagement or 'neutralisation' recognising that Soviet propensity to the area brings both rights and duties. He believes that a solution is possible, and that 'the elimination of Western bases in the Middle East along the borders of the Soviet Union may prove to be an advantage for which the Soviet leaders might be willing to pay a commensurate price in the form of a mutually acceptable system of guarantee against aggression' (p. 333). He also believes that if the region could be disentangled from the cold war, the Israeli-Arab dispute would be settled 'in the course of time', with minor frontier revisions in Arab favour and the return of part of the refugees.

The study gains interest from the author's perspective—to the East of the region—but suffers from his deep anti-Pakistani bias, particularly where it discusses the Baghdad Pact (now CENTO) and SEATO. But, of course, this is true of present Indian foreign policies in general, which makes Dr Banerji representative if not always convincing.

ALFRED SHERMAN

A POLITICAL STUDY OF THE ARAB-JEWISH CONFLICT: The Arab Refugee Problem (A Case Study). By Rony E. Gabbay. Geneva, Librairie E. Droz; Paris, Librairie Minard, 1959. xvii+611 pp. Maps. Tables. Bibliog. (*Études d'histoire économique, politique et sociale* No. xxix.) Sw. Frs. 50.

THERE is a world of difference between a painstaking D.Phil. and a good book. The first can take a legitimate pride in long footnotes, straight out of Oppenheim, on the difference between a truce and an armistice, or in giving references to seven Jordanian newspapers, where one is proof enough of some small point. Before such work reaches book stage, much pruning and some re-arrangement is usually desirable. It is a pity that no one gave Dr Gabbay this advice.

As its title suggests, his thesis amounts virtually to two books. The one ranges widely enough over Middle Eastern politics to discuss such topics as the Allied Middle East Command and the reasons why Nasser decided to shout down the Baghdad Pact. This general picture of Middle Eastern politics adds little to what is in other books, with one important exception. Dr Gabbay was born and educated in Iraq, but later lived in Israel. He knows both Arabic and

Hebrew, and provides an unusual range of quotations from books and newspapers in both these languages.

His work on the refugees is immense, and provides material on the motives for their flight, the efforts made to organize them and compensate them, and the resistances applied to this process. The weakness of this 'case study' is that its author, being Jewish, cannot cross the frontier and has never been able to see the 'cases' for himself, so that anything not recorded in reports and documents escapes his notice. For instance, a full case history of the Arab refugees ought to include an account of those who have rebuilt new lives, and of the important contribution that this twentieth century Dispersion has made to the life of the more backward Arab countries. It is, or has so far been, ten to one that the air-ways counter clerk, the hospital almoner, and the teacher in the Persian Gulf town will all be Palestinians. Or again, Dr Gabbay, basing himself on information obtainable in Israel, gives a long and interesting account of the operation whereby, with the assistance of Barclay's Bank D.C.O., Israel has been repaying blocked Arab balances. But he does not mention the repugnance, adverse propaganda, and delay caused in the early stages of this process when owners of the balances now in Syria and Jordan received forms to fill in, part of which was printed in Hebrew. Presumably he does not know of this, for wherever he thinks that Israel made a psychological mistake, he says so.

His book is too long for the amount of new material it provides. Its table of contents is copious, but does not do service for an index, which the book lacks. As he tends to repeat himself, it is only by luck that one turns at once to his best account of—say—the attempts by outsiders to prolong the first truce in the Palestine War. Another drawback of his work is that he omitted to have it read by someone whose native language is English. His translations from Hebrew and Arabic are clumsy; he is sometimes at fault over past tenses, and sometimes picks the wrong word for what he obviously means to say. His bibliography is exhaustive, and one must admire the amount of work he has put into his thesis.

ELIZABETH MONROE

MIDDLE EAST DIARY 1917-1956. By R. Meinertzhagen. London, Cresset Press, 1959. xi+376 pp. Index. 35s.

THIS is a collection of selected extracts from the seventy volumes of diary kept by a regular soldier, now over eighty. He was a friend and admirer of Dr Weizmann and an ardent Zionist from the early days of the Balfour Declaration. His mystical belief in the mission of the Jews and his hatred of what he calls 'hebraophobia' did not always fit in with his official duties as successively head of Allenby's military intelligence section, a member of the British Delegation to the Peace Conference, Chief Political Officer in Palestine, and Military Adviser to the Middle East Department of the Foreign Office. For example, Colonel Meinertzhagen's fearless expression of his unpalatable views, through unorthodox channels, led to his being sent home by Allenby.

His views, in general, are erratic: he expresses widely divergent opinions at various times on Colonel T. E. Lawrence and on (the then) Sir Herbert Samuel, and at one time was even an admirer of Adolf Hitler. ('My own view' (he says—p. 158) 'is that the German has a perfect right to treat the Jew as an alien and deny him German citizenship. He even has the right to expel him from Germany; but it must be done decently and with justice.')

This volume contains only a small selection of his private opinions and it is difficult from these alone to get a full idea of the range of Colonel Meinertzhagen's political views. It is doubtful in any case whether much can be gained by the publication of isolated extracts from private diaries in the author's lifetime, even when annotated by him subsequently, with hind-sight. Diaries are part of the raw material of history and must be used judiciously especially when, as in this case, the author deliberately says (p. 323), 'I find that my diary